

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action, dated January 12, 2005, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the prior art rejections set forth by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 & 103. Applicants submit that the references of record whether considered alone or in combination fail to either teach or suggest Applicant's presently claimed invention.

Applicants have modified all the independent claims to more clearly define the invention and added new claim 14. All independent claims recite a storage area with a rest space over said storage area. The present invention advantageously provides a pet rest and recreation apparatus which not only provides a place for the pet to rest or sleep but also storage for all of the pet's accessories and supplies. Consequently, an owner may advantageously utilize an organized and limited space for both the pet and all of its accessories and supplies. The present invention is far superior to existing pet houses which simply provide functional or ornamental pet recreational or rest spaces. There is simply no teaching or suggestion about an integrated pet rest and pet supply storage apparatus.

Raymond, U.S. Patent No. 3,173,398, is directed to an elevated lounge which can be placed adjacent to a window. Col. 1, lines 43-47. More specifically, Raymond discloses an inclined ramp leading to a lounge deck, wherein the angle of the ramp may be adjusted using adjustable brace members. Col. 2, line 71-Col. 3, lines 1-3. The ramp is provided with spaced apart side walls or rails which flank an intermediate floor on which a pet can walk on. Col. 3, lines 7-10. The lounge deck is equipped with a floor and a cushioned surface on which a pet may rest. Col. 3, lines 28-30. Raymond provides that when it is desired to move the device to another location, the ramp may be swung down to and secured at a position beneath the lounge deck at which time the device may be carried by a luggage type handle.

Col. 4, lines 67-74. On the contrary, the present invention provides a storage space such as, for example, a closet with a rest space over the closet. Raymond neither teaches nor suggests an integrated storage space and pet rest space.

Northrop et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,964,189, is directed to a multi-level cat playhouse comprised of an open-topped lower pet recreational body portion, a partially open-bottomed upper pet recreational body portion, and a separator located between the upper and lower portions. Col. 2, lines 1-7. Northrop et al. discloses that the lower body portion includes a generally rectangularly configured peripheral wall structure extending upwardly from a bottom wall to define a first interior space. Col. 4, lines 62-67. Access to the first interior space is provided by one or more access apertures which accommodate entry of a cat. Col. 5, lines 3-6. A layer of carpeting or other soft flooring material covers the first interior space to enhance the comfort of a reclining cat. Col. 5, lines 9-12. Additionally, a partially open-bottomed upper body portion includes a partial bottom wall as well as side walls defining a generally frusto-pyramidal interior space. Col. 5, lines 18-24; lines 45-49. The combination of a removable separator and the partially open-bottomed upper body portion defines a second interior space. Col. 6, lines 6-12. An accessway is provided between the first interior space of the lower body portion and the second interior space of the upper body portion for the pet. Col. 6, lines 12-19. Finally, the upper level of the playhouse, the roof of the upper body portion, defines an exterior area suitable as an elevated perch. Col. 7, lines 39-45. All of these spaces provide locations within which a cat may recline and experience a greater degree of security. Moreover, toys such as bells and chains as well as viewing apertures are provided at various locations for the enjoyment of the cat. Col. 9, lines 11-30. As a result, Northrop et al. provides a Victorian-era style playhouse for a cat with various interior pet

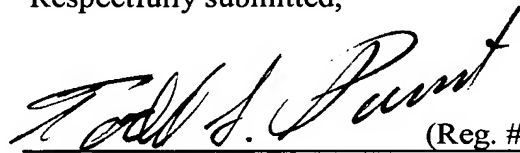
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recreation spaces. Col. 5, lines 59-65. Northrop et al. neither teaches nor suggests providing a storage space for all of a pet's supplies in addition to a pet rest area. Conversely, the present invention provides an integrated storage and pet rest apparatus.

The references of record fail to teach or suggest these advances in the art. Applicant respectfully submits that all claims now stand in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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